

Standard 4-6: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the Civil War and its impact on America.

4-6.3: Explain how specific events and issues led to the Civil War, including the sectionalism fueled by issues of slavery in the territories, states' rights, the election of 1860, and secession. (G, E, H)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

Previous /Future Knowledge:

In third grade, students summarized the institution of slavery prior to the Civil War, including reference to conditions in South Carolina, the invention of the cotton gin, subsequent expansion of slavery, and economic dependence on slavery (3-4.2). They also explained the reasons for South Carolina's secession from the Union, including the abolitionist movement, states' rights, and the desire to defend South Carolina's way of life (3-4.3).

In eighth grade, students will explain the impact of key events leading to South Carolina's secession from the Union (8-3.2).

In United States history, students will explain how the political events and issues that divided the nation led to civil war, and failures of the abolitionist movement, the conflicting views on states' rights and federal authority, the emergence of the Republican Party and its win in 1860, and the formation of the Confederate States of America (USHC-4.2).

It is essential for students to know:

Students should know how events related to westward expansion led to the Civil War including the Missouri Compromise, the annexation of Texas, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the *Dred Scott* decision (4-5.7). **Sectionalism** was the result of the growing cultural and economic differences between the regions (4-6.1) particularly their differences over issues of slavery in the territories. Sectionalism means that the interests of each section of the country- the North or the South- was more important to the people of that region than the interests of the country as a whole.

The Northern and Southern sections of the country also had different philosophies about the power of the federal government. Southerners supported the idea of **states' rights** because they feared that federal authorities might take away the right to own slaves as they had in the Northwest Ordinance and the Missouri Compromise north of the 36 30 (4-5.7). Southerners preferred the idea behind the Articles of Confederation (4-4.1). They argued that authority rested with the states not with the people as represented by the federal government. The North recognized the authority of the national government.

The **election of 1860** brought sectional conflict to the breaking point. The Republican Party opposed the expansion of slavery into the territories and nominated Abraham Lincoln as their candidate. The Democratic Party split their nomination between two candidates both of whom supported the rights of southerners to take their slaves into the territories. Stephen A Douglas was one of the Democratic candidates. A third party nominated a fourth candidate. The southern states feared that if Abraham Lincoln was elected they would lose power in the government as new states were admitted as free states and the balance of power in the United States Senate shifted to the free states. This loss of power might lead to the federal government outlawing slavery throughout the United States. Slavery in the territories was a key issue for the four candidates who competed for the presidency. Lincoln won the election of 1860. Many in the South mistakenly thought that Lincoln would free the slaves because he was a Republican even though he repeatedly said that he would respect the existence of slavery in the states in which it already existed. Claiming that they were protecting states' rights, eleven southern states seceded

from the Union. As a result of this **secession**, these states declared that they were a new country, the Confederate States of America, and elected Jefferson Davis president of the Confederacy. When Lincoln was inaugurated president of the United States he promised to uphold the laws and the Union. Although slavery caused the Civil War, Lincoln did not support the freeing of slaves. When the war began in 1861, neither the Union nor the Confederacy entered the war with any intention or desire to change the status of African Americans.

It is not essential for students to know:

It is not essential for students to know: the theory of nullification as explained by John C. Calhoun or the constitutional arguments behind the idea of states' rights. Students do not need to know that the Democratic Party split over the nomination of a candidate in 1860 or that Stephen Douglas was the candidate of the northern wing of the Democratic Party and John C. Breckinridge was the candidate from the South. They do not need to know that John Bell was the candidate of the Constitutional Union Party. Students do not need to know the life history of any of the candidates who ran for president in 1860, including Abraham Lincoln. They do not need to understand the difference between the popular vote and the electoral vote.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments would require students to **explain** the effects of specific events and issues that led to the Civil War. Students should be able to **summarize** the ideas of states' rights and **explain** how the issue of slavery in the territories led to the secession of the Southern states.